

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 02800 070927Z  
ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 IO-13 /070 W  
-----070931Z 098356 /15  
P R 070834Z APR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3100  
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 2800

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: SHUM PINT KS  
SUBJ: LOCATION OF MYONGDONG PRISONERS

REF: STATE 75749

1. ALL BUT ONE OF MYONGDONG PRISONERS WERE TRANSFERRED TO VARIOUS PRISONS IN KOREA ON MARCH 26 IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDARD PROCEDURES. PRISONERS UNDERGOING TRIAL ARE HELD IN HOUSE OF DETENTION IN JURISDICTION OF COURT. AFTER TRIAL, INCLUDING APPEALS TO HIGHER COURTS, PRISONERS, IF CONVICTED, ARE SENT TO OTHER JAILS TO SERVE TERMS. KIM TAE CHUNG IS ONLY MYONGDONG PRISONER WHO STILL HAS CASE PENDING BEFORE COURTS (ELECTION LAW VIOLATION CASE), AND, THEREFORE, HE REMAINS IN SEOUL HOUSE OF DETENTION. COMMON CRIMINALS ARE USUALLY SENT TO PRISON NEAR THEIR HOMES ALTHOUGH OVERCROWDING SOMETIMES LEADS TO THEIR BEING ASSIGNED TO LOCATIONS FAR FROM THEIR FAMILIES. POLITICAL PRISONERS HAVE BEEN DISPERSED THROUGHOUT COUNTRY AS A MATTER OF POLICY SINCE 1974 WHEN ROKG EXPERIENCED DIFFICULTIES IN THOSE PRISONS WHERE POLITICAL PRISONERS WERE CONCENTRATED.

2. OTHER MYONGDONG PRISONERS ARE NOW LOCATED IN PRISONS AS FOLLOWS:  
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| PRISONER      | PLACE OF DETENTION |
|---------------|--------------------|
| MUN IK HWAN   | CHONJU             |
| MUN TONG HWAN | MOKPO              |
| YUN PAN UNG   | TAEJON             |
| SO NAM TONG   | MASAN              |

YI MUN YONG        SUNCHON  
HAM SE UNG        KWANGJU  
MUN CHONG HYON        KIMHAE  
SIN HYON PONG        CHONGJU

3. IN ACCORD STANDARD PRISON REGULATIONS, PRISONERS MAY HAVE VISITS ONCE A MONTH, BUT ONLY FROM MEMBERS OF IMMEDIATE FAMILY, NOT FROM FRIENDS OR MORE DISTANT RELATIVES. FAMILIES MAY ESTABLISH A FUND OF 30,000 WON FOR EACH PRISONER TO BUY GOODS AND SERVICES OVER AND ABOVE BASIC SUPPLIES PROVIDED BY PRISON. HOWEVER, UNLIKE THE SEOUL DETENTION HOUSE, PROVINCIAL PRISONS DO NOT PERMIT THESE FUNDS TO ACCUMULATE FROM MONTH TO MONTH, AND SUMS FOR PURCHASES OVER 30,000 WON CANNOT BE BUILT UP.

4. A RELIABLE BLUE HOUSE SOURCE TOLD POLCOUNS THAT ROKG EMPLOYED NO DISCRIMINATION IN ASSIGNING MYONGDONG PRISONERS TO PROVINCIAL JAILS AND NOTED THAT GIVEN WIDE DISPARITIES IN CONDITION OF NATION'S PRISONS, SOME WOULD FIND SITUATION IN THE PROVINCES BETTER THAN IN SEOUL AND SOME WOULD FIND THINGS WORSE. ONLY TWO FAMILIES HAVE VISITED DEFENDANTS SO FAR, AND THUS REPORTS ON NEW CONDITIONS FOR PRISONERS ARE STILL SKETCHY. MUN IK-HWAN IS CONFINED IN A SMALLER CELL THAN HE HAD IN SEOUL BUT OTHERWISE SEEMS TO HAVE FOUND THINGS MORE OR LESS EQUAL TO THE SEOUL DETENTION HOUSE. YI MUN-YONG'S CONDITIONS ARE DECIDEDLY INFERIOR. IT WILL PROBABLY BE A WHILE BEFORE FAMILIES HAVE VISITED ALL PRISONERS AND PATTERN OF THEIR TREATMENT CAN BE ESTABLISHED. EMBASSY  
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WILL REPORT DEVELOPMENTS PROMPTLY.  
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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** WELFARE & WHEREABOUTS, POLITICAL PRISONERS  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 2866875  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** LOCATION OF MYONGDONG PRISONERS  
**TAGS:** SHUM, PINT, PINS, KS  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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